

§ 220.15

(1) The residual functional capacity evaluation is based upon functional objective tests with high validity and reliability;

(2) The medical evidence shows multiple impairments which have a cumulative effect on the employee's residual functional capacity;

(3) Symptoms associated with limitations are consistent with objective findings;

(4) There exists an adequate trial of therapies with good compliance, but poor outcome;

(5) There exists consistent history of conditions between treating physicians and other health care providers.

(b) *Factors which support lesser weight.* Evidence will generally be given lesser weight if it meets one or more of the following criteria:

(1) There is an inconsistency between the diagnoses of the treating physicians;

(2) There is inconsistency between reports of pain and functional impact;

(3) There is inconsistency between subjective symptoms and physical examination findings;

(4) There is evidence of poor compliance with treatment regimen, keeping appointments, or cooperating with treatment;

(5) There is evidence of exam findings which is indicative of exaggerated or potential malingering response;

(6) The evidence consists of objective findings of exams that have poor reliability or validity;

(7) The evidence consists of imaging findings which are nonspecific and largely present in the general population;

(8) The evidence consists of a residual functional capacity evaluation which is supported by limited objective data without consideration for functional capacity testing.

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§ 220.15 Effects of work on occupational disability.

(a) *Disability onset when the employee works despite impairment.* An employee who has stopped work in his or her regular occupation due to a permanent physical or mental impairment(s) may make an effort to return to work in his or her regular occupation. If the em-

20 CFR Ch. II (4-1-12 Edition)

ployee is subsequently forced to stop that work after a short time because of his or her impairment(s), the Board will generally consider that work as an unsuccessful work attempt. In this situation, the Board may determine that the employee became disabled for work in his or her regular occupation before the last date the employee worked in his or her regular occupation. No annuity will be payable, however, until after the last date worked.

(b) *Occupational disability annuitant work restrictions.* The restrictions which apply to an annuitant who is disabled for work in his or her regular occupation are found in §§ 220.160 through 220.164.

§ 220.16 Responsibility to notify the Board of events which affect disability.

If the annuitant is entitled to a disability annuity because he or she is disabled for work in his or her regular occupation, the annuitant should promptly tell the Board if—

(a) His or her impairment(s) improves;

(b) He or she returns to any type of work;

(c) He or she increases the amount of work; or

(d) His or her earnings increase.

§ 220.17 Recovery from disability for work in the regular occupation.

(a) *General.* Disability for work in the regular occupation will end if—

(1) There is medical improvement in the annuitant's impairment(s) to the extent that the annuitant is able to perform the duties of his or her regular occupation; or

(2) The annuitant demonstrates the ability to perform the duties of his or her regular occupation. The Board provides a trial work period before terminating a disability annuity because of the annuitant's return to work.

(b) *Definition of the trial work period.* The trial work period is a period during which the annuitant may test his or her ability to work and still be considered occupationally disabled. It begins and ends as described in paragraph (e) of this section. During this period, the annuitant may perform "services" (see paragraph (c) of this section) in as